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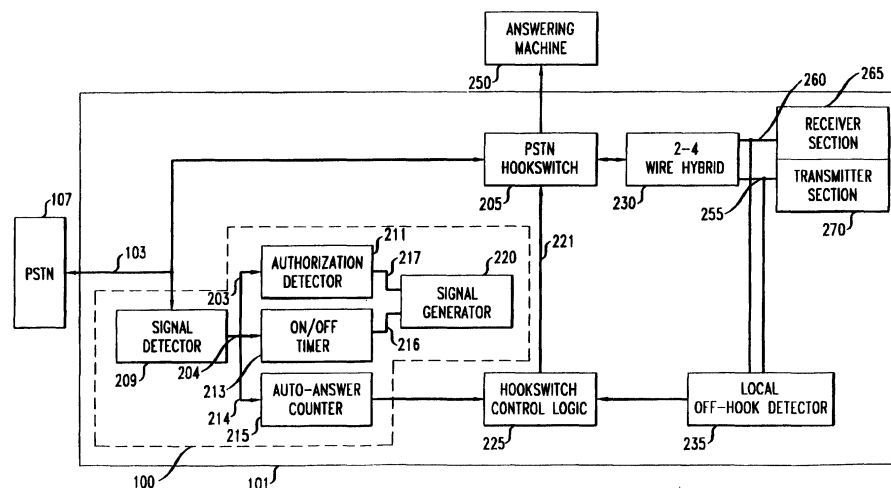
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(54) **Programmable timer circuit for the signal generator of a communication device**

(57) A timer circuit (100) for controlling the volume of signals generated by the signal generator (220) of a communication device (101) at preprogrammed times is disclosed. The programmable timer circuit (100) monitors the communication link (103) for the presence of signals indicative of an incoming communication. When such signals are detected and the volume control state of the timer circuit (213) is ON the volume of the audible signals generated by the signal generator (220) of the communication device is adjusted so that such audible signals are broadcast with a programmed loudness. Vol-

ume control of the audible signals generated by the signal generator does not prevent outgoing communications using the communication device. The fact that the volume of the audible signals generated by the signal generator is controlled, is not apparent to the calling party. Incoming calls for which the volume of the audible signals generated by the signal generator have been controlled can be automatically forwarded to a locally connected answering machine (250). An override feature is provided that allows an audible signal indicative of an incoming call to be generated, even when the timer circuit is ON, if an authorized signal is detected (by 211).

FIG. 2





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
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A	* column 3, line 1 - column 10, line 65; figures 1-8 *	3,9	
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 21 December 1999	Examiner Delangue, P
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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